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SPENCE BLAZAK is a card. He studies Political Science, Creative Writing, and Economics, but only because "Ditch Digging" and "Shrekonomics" aren't offered. Growing up, he wanted to "be an anteater." Now Spence hopes to be a government bureaucrat, be published in *The New York Times*, see the Atlantic Ocean, have Taylor Swift retweet him, and be an anteater. His interests include things so nerdy he won't mention them in case women reading this will be turned off, Batman (in case any women reading this think that sort of thing is "cool"), quirky movies, quirky books, quirky Zooey Deschanel clips from "New Girl", Jerry Seinfeld impressions, pizza, watching depressing HBO dramas for hours, and funny pictures of bears doing people things. Spence is most notable for the quote: "I like my women the way I like my hummus: Classic."

How Sad is Too Sad, page 16



NICK PERRONE is a contributing photographer for the *Review*, who hails from New York and lives only a mere five minutes from the Beyoncé/Jay-Z mansion. Nick is pursuing a double major in Journalism/Media Studies and a BA in Visual Arts, while simultaneously double minoring in Cultural Anthropology and Political Science. He aspires to be a photojournalist for a large publication like *The New York Times*, and seeks to document the war, poverty, and human conflicts. For leisure, he spends hours watching *Doctor Who*, laughing at ridiculous Youtube videos, drinking tea, and occasionally photoshopping rappers into humorous situations (at The Last Supper or as big cats). Nick is undoubtedly the most genuinely cool dude and dapper fellow, and is an irreplaceable member of the *Review* art team.

The Playlist, page 28



KATE DEVINE grew up on the shores of central New Jersey and can usually tell if you're from a beach town too. When she is not reading or writing for her English classes, she might be selling her clothes to consignment shops or trying to remember how to converse in Spanish. In the past year she has dipped her toes into the Mediterranean Sea, the Atlantic Ocean, the Pacific Ocean, and the Manasquan River. She signed up for a meditation course this semester, but could never find the time to actually make it to the weekly class; well intentioned dilemmas like these are typical for Kate. This self-proclaimed "redhead for life" is a critical part of the *Review* staff, as she strives to explain herself in relatable and playful poetry and prose.

Phone Numbers?, page 36



e at The Rutgers Review like to push the envelope. We like to go beyond established boundaries and discuss the things that other publications don't. This issue is no exception. We are fearless in our criticisms of controversial societal issues; of racism, consumerism, capitalism, and religion. Guys are openly crying, our Potpourri editor is laughing in the face of death, and hardcore and R&B make their first ever appearance within our pages. We took in all your selfies and compiled them together to reflect who exactly it is that contributes to our publication; without all of you, we are nothing, and what we publish reflects what exactly it is you all want to read. As times change, so do we, recognizing that we are, in fact, reflective of the people who read our issues. It's okay to be edgy and go against the grain; in fact, being the "alternative" publication has always been the Review's crowning achievement. We take what we get and we do what we can, and sometimes what we come up with is surprising, but nonetheless, wonderful. So open this issue and read with an open mind. You'll see (lots of) commentary and poetry and, hopefully, a reflection of yourself (selfie nation, everyone). This issue is proof that we publish whatever it is that the other campus publications don't, and what all of you really want to read. We are the voice of all of you.



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LAWS OF THE LAND

WORDS BY SUZY ALBANESE ILLUSTRATION BY NICOLLE ROCHINO I transferred to Rutgers my junior year without any prior knowledge of the school, even though I'm from New Jersey. Due to extreme stubbornness and a distaste for socializing, I hadn't attended any orientations. I immediately regretted this when attempting to find my first class, which was at this place called "Busch," but I really hadn't seen any bushes around.

I eventually taught myself the ropes, thanks to shamelessness and occasional nice folks pointing me in the right direction. Now that I can at least mask myself as a legitimate Rutgers student, I thought I'd pay it forward. Below are some things I've learned either through observation or making a complete fool out of myself.

THE WORD WEBREG IS SYNONYMOUS WITH SATAN. DON'T EXPECT TO HOLD A CONVERSATION WITH SOMEONE WHEN THEY ARE REGISTERING FOR CLASSES. YOU MAY NOT BE SAVED.

YOU DON'T WAIT FOR A BUS AT COLLEGE HALL. YOU MIGHT AS WELL WAIT FOR WORLD PEACE.

YOUR BACKPACK DOESN'T REQUIRE ITS OWN VIP SEAT ON THE BUS.

YOU DON'T GO OUT ON WEDNESDAY (UNLESS YOU'RE GONNA KARAOKE IT UP AT GOLDEN RAIL), BUT YOU DO GO OUT ON TUESDAY, THURSDAY, FRIDAY, AND SATURDAY.

YOU DON'T WALK TO THE BUS STOP ON A RAINY MORNING; HOWEVER, YOU WALK TO THE BARS IN LITTLE TO NO CLOTHING ON A DECEMBER NIGHT.

IF YOU ARE APPROACHED BY A GROUP OF SORORITY GIRLS IN MATCHING WINDBREAKERS, RUN, THEY WANT YOUR BLOOD.

IF YOU REGISTER FOR PSYCHOLOGY OF ART, YOU DON'T ACTUALLY ATTEND CLASS.

WHILE DRIVING ON COLLEGE AVENUE, BE PREPARED TO COME TO A COMPLETE HALT TO LET HUNDREDS OF ANNOYING PEDESTRIAN STUDENTS STAMPEDE IN FRONT OF YOU.

LIKEWISE, WHILE WALKING AT A CROSSWALK, IT'S COMPLETELY ACCEPTABLE TO FLIP OFF AN IMPATIENT ASSHOLE TRYING TO RUN YOU OVER. YOU'RE A PEDESTRIAN! YOU HAVE THE RIGHT OF WAY!

ALL OF THE BARS ON EASTON AVENUE ARE RELATIVELY LEGITIMATE, EXCEPT FOR CORNER TAVERN. CORNER TAVERN SMELLS LIKE A MIXTURE OF PISS AND BLEACH.

DON'T PULL THE FUCKING YELLOW CORD ON THE BUS TO REQUEST A STOP THE BUS WILL STOP ANYWAY.

EATING AT BROWER IS COMPARABLE TO EATING THE ICE CREAM OFF THE GROUND OUTSIDE OF IT.

YOU DON'T TAKE THE BUS FROM THE RSC TO SCOTT HALL, AND IF YOU DO, YOU DON'T ADMIT TO IT.

IF YOU ARE FEMALE AND DON'T OWN A NORTH FACE OR A VERA BRADLEY ACCESSORY, DO YOU **EVEN GO HERE?**

DON'T GIVE THE BEGGING, WELL-DRESSED, "HOMELESS" 20-SOMETHINGS MONEY. THEY ARE WAITING OUTSIDE OF YOUR CLASSROOM BUILDING BECAUSE THEY KNOW YOU'RE A SUCKER.

Whether it's through my advice or your own misadventures, I'm sure you will encounter all of these situations soon enough. For those of you who already know what I'm talking about, congratulations—your exorbitant tuition has been well spent!

CONSUMERISM SCARES ME

WORDS BY GIOIA KENNEDY PHOTO BY M.A. NASER

America is the land of opportunity. A healthy dose of determination and a dash of luck will get you anywhere you want to go, or if not, pretty damn close.

If something can make any amount of profit you'll see it on a shelf in your local Walgreens sooner than you'll realize what it even does. All those lazy Sundays spent watching commercials for The Magic Bullet, Roomba, Wax-Vac, etc. have provided endless entertainment while opening my eyes to everyday problems I didn't know existed. In a land where almost anything is sellable, including a backwards blanket with sleeves, it's hard to discern a luxury good from a necessity. Did I really need to invest in a \$30 Rutgers-themed Snuggie? Probably not, but it certainly felt that way when I bought it.

The problem with living in a consumer-crazed culture is the inescapable feeling that there is always more to be had. That the next thing I buy will finally make me feel whole and good. I've also found that the more expensive a product, the more emotional its advertising is. As I type on my MacBook, I'm reflecting on Apple's "Think Different" campaign. In one commercial, historical figures like Gandhi, Martin Luther King, Jr., and John Lennon are featured in simple black-and-white footage and are described as "round pegs in square holes" who "pushed the human race forward." These figures, like the face behind Apple, Steve Jobs, are part of an elite group of people with

know-how and talent that money can't buy. Nowhere in the commercial is an Apple product shown, but it's implied that with a purchase of an iPhone or the new Macbook Air, you aren't just buying something that will make your day a little easier, you are actually in the league of Gandhi and Lennon. This isn't a Slap-Chop you'll use once and then forget about in the junk drawer of your kitchen. You're buying a piece of history. You're investing in a revolutionary idea.

Advertising that elicits a strong emotional response is a manipulative way to justify spending \$1000 on a computer that in reality isn't even that great. Advertising has moved beyond tangible products like a computer or car. Once American entrepreneurs realized they could sell an experience just as much as a product, there was no turning back. College brochures that sell the experience of being an undergraduate are no different than Apple's "Think Different" campaign. The private sector has moved beyond selling something you can hold in your hand and instead uses advertising campaigns to guarantee you'll have a good time. College is the "best four years of your life" where you'll meet your best friends, stay up all night studying, graduate, and land your dream job. And if you get to college and realize it's not the



U\$A! U\$A!

"best time ever," and you sit in your room on a Saturday night munching roasted kale and watching the entire third season of *The Sopranos*, you end up feeling pretty shitty about yourself.

I have not only found this phenomenon when it comes to college. Now that I'm a junior, my Facebook feed has been blowing up with pictures of friends studying abroad. Instead of studying abroad during the semester, I personally decided to use the money I'd saved up during the year to embark on an adventure of my own last summer. I trekked by train from France to the UK, staying in hostels and taking in the world around me. I didn't travel with a group or pay a touring company. I had no idea what was in store for me when I left but that was the fun of it. I even took a course at the Sorbonne with people of all ages, all nationalities taught by a strange Parisian man. I mean, where else would I meet a 31-year-old Alaskan-Chanel-salesperson-turned-Parisian living with her Somalian boyfriend?

There was no voice in the back of my head telling me how I was supposed to be conducting myself or what I should be doing every hour of the day. Sure, it's helpful to have the structure of a traveling group of fellow students, but I found my experience to be more enriching than any tour group could have been. I see kids from my high school downing a beer at Oktoberfest in Munich, wearing lederhosen, and surrounded by other Americans. I think about the German guy who I met in Edinburgh who told me to never go to Oktoberfest in a big city since it's been taken over by tourists. He then invited me to join him and his family in a small town in Bavaria. (It was a drunken invitation and I don't even remember his name, but hey!)

The point of my rambling is this: don't think other people are having a better time than you just because you decided to stray from the norm. Don't be fooled by the way college and studying abroad is portrayed in advertising and pop culture. The hype is sometimes not the truth. We are all humans who face the ups and downs of everyday life. No one is having a better time than you. Don't be fed the cookie-cutter factory-made experiences of life. Stop thinking about what you're "supposed" to be doing. Go out on your own and just *live*.

BLENDING THE

BY NIKKO ESPINA

Last summer, I hung out with a close friend and some of her friends in a town replete with lush grass fields, elegant horses, farm mansions, and white people. We spent the day lounging by the pool wearing mustache glasses, while they had isolating conversations about people I didn't know. Somehow, the discussion unexpectedly veered onto the topic of racial inequality.

"Why is there BET? Why do black people get to have their own network?" one girl began. "Oh no..." I thought, as the smoke began to rise. "And why are there special colleges and scholarships for black people only? That isn't fair," which I could not believe came out of my friend's mouth.

My skin grew hot and prickly. Although I was outnumbered and quite uncomfortable, I spoke up: "As an Asian American, I appreciate scholarships that help support Asian students fund their way through college. It's not racist; it's about supporting your own culture with equal opportunities." Eventually, their eyes darted away as time naturally deflated the conversation and my unease began to fade.

On a brighter, more satisfying note, we had the most delicious buffalo-chicken pizza for dinner that night. When we finished, I checked the receipt and was shocked by the cost. "Don't worry, we're taking care of you tonight," my friend said, with a hopeful smile. If their hearts were kind enough to treat me to such an expensive dinner and a wonderful day of fun, certainly they will mature and someday develop a more profound understanding regarding the issue of race, which can so blatantly affect a friend like me.

Something about offended white people feels deliriously strange and puts me on edge. Take one minute to flip through some TV channels, as many as you want. It should not take long to notice that most of the people seen are white. White children, white families, white stories being told. Unfortunately, the few people of color cast in shows usually play stereotypical, minimal roles. They simply cannot portray a person perceived outside of their own race (two great exceptions being Mindy from The Mindy Project and Winston from New Girl).

Black people having their own entertainment channel is not racist. It allows them more creative control over what types of shows to develop and kinds of characters to create. Additionally, I would appreciate the development of a mainstream show based on an Asian/Pacific Islander family, because there are certain cultural values, types of humor, and dif-

WHITE CHILDREN, WHITE FAMILIES, WHITE STORIES BEING TOLD

ferent overall vibes and energy that I only experience and understand with other Asians/Pacific Islanders. It's not racist, it's just culture. White culture is shown on television all the time. When discussing this matter with my friend Marco, he said, "My family is not like white families and my culture is not represented in those shows."

It is not my intention to specifically target white people by writing this. Rather, I am addressing those with ignorant thoughts regarding racial inequality, those who try to validate reverse racism, and those who believe that we live in a "post-racial" world where race no longer matters merely because our president is black. The only people who "feel" targeted are the ones who feel guilty. Those who feel offended by what I say here probably should feel that way.

Unfortunately, people of color can't always connect to the lives of white people on television. Why do we only get to view white people all the time? What they go through isn't necessarily the same as what I go through. Or what Spanish people go through. Or Middle Easterners, or Native Americans. It is essential that we recognize and nurture diversity. But first we need to understand it.



1. "IT'S THAT THING WHERE YOU DO FLIPS AND JUMP OFF ROOFTOPS."

Defined in an inclusive manner, parkour is when you try to use your body with your environment. It is not considered extreme or a sport. It is a discipline of a playful, experimental nature, kind of like a martial art. How quickly can you get from here to there? Can you move without touching the ground? How many different ways can you get past this rail? It is not defined by the movement, but by the mindset of using your body and your environment. It can include flips and rooftops, but that isn't the point. The point is that there is movement and that steps are taken to refine said movement.

2. PARKOUR IS NOT A VERB.

Parkour can be many things: a philosophy, a movement set, an art, a discipline. At the end of the day, it is a concept, but not a verb. You don't "soccer" a ball; you kick it. Similarly, we don't "parkour" a wall or a rail; we climb, vault or do whatever specific movement name we did.

3. "I COULD NEVER DO THAT."

Many of the reactions I get from people are "I could never do that." There is no set move-list, superpower, or secret club to join in order to do parkour; you move with your body as it is now. It is a path to becoming stronger, and it is open to any gender, color, nationality, and body. All it really takes is for you to think "Hmmm...I have these arms and legs attached to a torso, so I'm gonna use them to move with that thing over there."

Before anyone gives themselves any more excuses on why they can't do parkour (it's another thing not wanting to), there is a video on YouTube about a guy born with cerebral palsy who also does parkour. Go watch it, it's awesome.

4. THERE ARE NO "PROFESSIONALS"...

There is no set skill level at which one becomes "pro" because each individual practices parkour at his/her

own skill level. "Good" is relative to how far a person has progressed on his/her own path. There are very few people in the world that are paid by a company to show off their stuff. Most major names are people who make good videos and are well-known for their movement, but these individuals will agree that they are each at their own level, and so is everyone else.

...AND EVERYONE IS DIFFERENT.

In parkour, there are many ways to move, and many levels at which to move. Some people like adding flips and tricks, others prefer to focus on strength and longevity. There are many ways to practice parkour, many ways to define it, and several ways to name it. The beauty of this discipline is that everyone can have their own path.

6. WE AREN'T CRAZY.

There are many who consider what we do to be dangerous. While we tend to agree that parkour involves risk—sometimes small, sometimes great—we also have our ways of managing this risk. Therefore, there is risk, but danger is minimized. Over the course of their training (if done right), they have conditioned their body so that there is a sort of muscle armor. They also have a "bail plan" should the movement go wrong, and have developed an instinct of how to fall proportional to the movement they are making. Most importantly, the practitioner understands the movement, his/her own body, and is in the moment, not focusing on what happened before or what might happen after, because only the present moment can be controlled.

In parkour, it's your body and you do and don't do as you please with it. You are never obligated to move, and when you move, it's your body, not a foreign object, that you're controlling. In this sense, parkour is safer than most other sports, because you have control over every acting element: you.

CULTURE



BAGELS FOR THOUGHT

WORDS BY OLYMPIA CHRISTOFINIS PHOTO BY JONATHAN GULO

Only a fool would be blind and indifferent to the holy bagel. There are plenty of cafés and bistros that carry glorious bagels, in addition to a handful of bagel delis scattered across New Brunswick.

After some research, I've come up with a comprehensive list of the best (or not-so-best) bagel joints in New Brunswick, ratings and all. Enjoy my findings, maybe with a bagel in hand.

BAGEL NOSH ••••

357 GEORGE STREET

Fear not, for disappointment is not what you'll experience at Bagel Nosh. This cozy deli located downtown has an assortment guaranteed to make your taste buds salivate. Ranging from an everything bagel all the way to the famous french toast bagel, there is a flavor to please anyone. The deli even has a long list of bagel sandwich suggestions, such as hummus-veggie.

HOLE IN THE WALL ••••

25 EASTON AVE

True to its name, this little hole in the wall is situated in an extremely convenient location on Easton Ave. The bagels are a monstrosity of a size and, coupled with a generous portion of cream cheese, they are bound to fill you up. This deli has delicious bagels, but not enough of a varied collection with its cream cheese flavors and types of bagels offered (when compared to the Nosh right above, that is).

TASTE ••••

120 ALBANY STREET

This bistro opened during the week of November 4th, 2013. They offer a very small selection of bagel types; despite that, the bagels are of an agreeable size and do not need to be toasted. The bistro offers garlic and herb cream cheese, the dairy partner-in-crime of its carb-rich counterpart.

GERLANDA'S ●●⊙⊙⊙

RUTGERS STUDENT CENTER

Part of Gerlanda's beautiful ensemble of baked goods is the paltry bagel section. Although the french toast bagel is included, it is a disappointment and a disgrace to the bagel community. However, the rest of the collection of bagels is great for a pick-meup, but ensure that the bagel is toasted-otherwise, they're not worth the investment.

ABP ● ○ ○ ○ ○ ○

126 COLLEGE AVE

Not to be harsh, but it feels like a joke writing about the bagels this chain has to offer. The bagels sadly do not measure up to the rest of the café's exhibition of baked goodness. They taste far too much like bread and are smaller in size in comparison to the bagels the 5-and-4-ranking bagel delis offer. Spare yourself the energy it takes to digest and don't bother, unless you're in the mood for a low-quality bagel.

FROM TOTTER'S LANE TO TRENZALORE

BY DALTON MACK



With the 50th anniversary barely in our rearview, Doctor Who is at its apex of popularity here in the States. Unfortunately, many of us are wholly unfamiliar with the first run of everyone's favorite madman in a blue box.

For those who have yet to take an adventure with the Doctor, the show is about a humanoid time-traveling alien that encounters a wide variety of monsters and creatures, forever altering and saving societies, often alongside a companion or two.

Doctor Who originally ran from 1963 (debuting the day after Kennedy's assassination) to 1989, with a made-for-TV movie continuing the saga in 1996. The four "NuWho" Doctors we're accustomed to are far different from their forebears, as is the nature of the show.

First, the bulk of modern episodes are 45-minute stand-alones. Sure, they're often loosely connected by a season-long story arc, but for the most part they encompass a full story. In the old run, "serials" were broken down into anywhere between two and twelve(!) 25-minute episodes that together formed a full story. The plus side to this method was that nearly every episode ended with a cliffhanger, building intense anticipation for the next week's chapter.

Fans of the current show, however, will have to be patient with the pacing of older episodes. There are hardly any jump cuts, and oftentimes it comes across as a stage performance rather than a television program. That said, the writing is fantastic and character development takes precedence over hand-waving, timey-wimey activity by the Doctor, a common criticism of the modern program.

Much like NuWho, each incarnation of the Doctor is completely different from whomever preceded him. The First Doctor is an old curmudgeon that essentially kidnaps his first companions, the Third is a foppish, James Bond-esque character that drives around a yellow buggy named "Bessie" (how cool is that?!), the Fourth is a jovial, scarf-sporting nut with a fondness for oversized hats and jelly babies, and the Seventh is a cerebral chess master of a Doctor, And that's just a few!

A great benefit to watching the old show is getting to see the genesis and backstories of various enemies of the Doctor like the Daleks ("The Daleks," Season 1/Serial 2) and the Autons ("Spearhead from Space," Season 7/Serial 1).

So come on, hop in the TARDIS, and take a trip you'll never forget. Below is a guide for all you current (and soon-to-be) Whovians.

SERIALS TO CHECK OUT FROM EACH DOCTOR:

First Doctor (William Hartnell): "The Romans," "The Dalek Invasion of Earth"

Second Doctor (Patrick Troughton): "Tomb of the Cybermen," "The Evil of the Daleks"

Third Doctor (Jon Pertwee): "Spearhead from Space," "Inferno"

Fourth Doctor (Tom Baker): "Genesis of the Daleks," "Pyramids of Mars"

Fifth Doctor (Peter Davison): "The Caves of Androzani," "The Caves of Androzani" (a second time, it's that brilliant)

Sixth Doctor (Colin Baker): ...MAYBE "Vengeance

Seventh Doctor (Sylvester McCoy): "The Curse of Fenric," "Remembrance of the Daleks"

Eighth Doctor (Paul McGann): The TV movie. What else?



Why watch a depressing movie? Not a sad movie, a really depressing one. Maybe some mild inspiration will be peppered in at the end, but I'm talking borderline nihilistic in its portrayal of a story. Maybe it's the sense of perspective it gives us. Here we sit on our throne of comfort, while much of the world is in shambles. Depressing movies might be the equivalent to the Roman tradition for generals on parade after a big victory: to be followed around by a man whispering, "Remember, you are mortal" in your ear. Another possibility is the chance for connection. The pathos that the work evokes connects you with everyone else ever touched by it, giving the experience that much more meaning.

Taking this one step further, why watch a movie that makes you cry? Why cry at all, if given the choice not to? I write this on Veterans Day, and seeing the footage of soldiers coming home early and surprising their kids melts my ogre-like heart every time I watch. How does one evoke that same intense emotion from

WHERE IS THE LINE DRAWN **BETWEEN TOUCHING AND SOUL-CRUSHING?**

a film? Well, there are films that are beautiful, touching, and on a whole other level like Spirited Away or Up, which appeal to nostalgia as well as the basic human necessity for connection. Then there's the whole other end of the spectrum: movies that are just plain sad. This brings up a couple questions: Where is the line drawn between touching and soul-crushing? Why is the latter even needed? For starters, let's look at some films from the past. Mild spoilers ahead.

Swedish director Ingmar Bergman was a master of gloom. One of his first films was 1960's The Virgin Spring, an understated film that went on to inspire the

horror movie The Last House on the Left. A family lives in the woods, and one of their daughters is the perfect child: chaste, studious, a hard worker. Then one day when she's out gathering wood, two men who are traveling through rape and kill her. The crux of the film comes when the two men have nowhere to stay, and stumble upon the girl's house. The girl's heartbroken father invites them to stay, then slowly begins to realize that they were the perpetrators. He exacts his revenge on them brutally, and the film ends with the father finding his daughter's body in the woods, lifting it up to release a new spring. Horrifyingly depressing? Yes, but I suppose the father learns a lesson about vengeance, as well as seeing hope for the future through the karmic nature of him losing his daughter, which might save the movie from nihilism.

A moral of "the world is a terrible place, but there is always some kind of light" is a popular way in which the saddest of movies save themselves from making their audiences crawl into a hole and assume the fetal position. Life is Beautiful follows a man who is in a concentration camp with his son, but tries to keep him from realizing what is going on by turning it into a game. Amour shows an old man trying to take care of his wife after she has a stroke. Million Dollar Baby shows an aged boxing trainer begrudgingly take up another client—only to have her fatally paralyzed

Then there is *The Son's Room*, possibly the saddest movie I've ever seen. It follows a therapist who loves his son more than anything in the world. You know it's coming, and then it finally does: the son dies in a terrible accident. The film deals with the horror of the aftermath. Tolls on the marriage. Going back to work. But the worst comes with the man thinking about what could have been, imagining stopping his son from leaving for his demise, and spending one last day with him. The resolution? Life goes on.

The Son's Room is that special brand of sad movie where the only light at the end of the tunnel is "maybe things will get better." This year's 12 Years a Slave and Fruitvale Station would also fit that description. The former is the true story of a man born free in the 1800's who is kidnapped and sold into slavery for over a decade. The latter is the true story of an innocent black male being killed by a policeman on New Year's Eve 2008. Slave forgoes character development

and compelling narrative in favor of showing humanity in one of its darkest hours. Sure, in the end he is freed, but after the five scenes of whipping and two hours of horror, it is hard to feel any kind of inspiration. By contrast, Fruitvale goes the opposite direction, using strong development of the characters, creating pathos, then burning everything to the ground with its soul-crushing end.

MAYBE DEPRESSING MOVIES EXIST TO GIVE US PERSPECTIVE AND KEEP US AWARE OF THE WORLD.

Maybe depressing movies exist to give us perspective and keep us aware of the world. Maybe it is to milk the medium for all of the raw beauty that it has to offer. Maybe they teach us to never get too comfortable, reminding us that anything could be around the corner and to enjoy the moment. But I like to think that they are for the connection with the world. It can be a shitty place, but films like The Son's Room show that we aren't in it alone. As Rutgers alumnus Jimmy Valvano so famously said, "If you laugh, you think, and you cry, that's a full day. That's a heck of a day. You do that seven days a week, you're going to have something special." You can experience all three from watching Jimmy V's wonderful speech, but you can also get this from many of these movies. Well, the laughter might be a little on the conservative side, but who is to stop you from a double feature with the cinematic tour de force Shrek 2?



BOY MEETS GIRL, GIRL LOVES BOY, IM-PROBABLE FORCES KEEP THEM APART.

We laugh, we cry (from either laughter or heartache), and then we smile. Romantic comedies have held quite the high standing with romantics everywhere, and although many boyfriends cringe at the mere thought of them, some of them secretly enjoy them too. Here is a list of 10 rom-coms that I think everyone should see at least once, in no particular order.

1. WHEN HARRY MET SALLY

The epitome of your classic rom-com. Before there was No Strings Attached and Friends with Benefits, Harry and Sally tackled the belief or, rather, disbelief that men and women cannot be strictly friends. Billy Crystal and Meg Ryan star in this 1989 classic, one of the most frequently mentioned rom-coms to this day.

2. THE PROPOSAL

Sandra Bullock plays an intimidating book publisher who, after having found out that she is about to be deported for an expired visa, convinces her assistant (Ryan Reynolds) to marry her. If the undeniable chemistry between the two isn't enough, just picture Betty White singing along to Ludacris' "Get Low." Definitely a must-see in my book.

3. **HOW TO LOSE A GUY IN 10 DAYS**

Andie Anderson (Kate Hudson) begins by dating a guy and then driving him away using the classic mistakes women make in relationships for her how-to column in Composure Magazine. Ben (Matthew McConaughey), however, has his own agenda, after making a bet that he could make any woman fall in love with him to get a pitch to advertise diamonds.

4. 10 THINGS I HATE ABOUT YOU

An adaptation of Shakespeare's The Taming of the Shrew in which a new student is determined to find someone to date the meanest girl at school so he can date her younger sister. Let's not forget it features a very young Joseph Gordon-Levitt and Heath Ledger!

5. THERE'S SOMETHING ABOUT MARY

Probably one of the funniest rom-coms ever. Ted (Ben Stiller) gets another chance to see his dream girl from high school (Cameron Diaz) again after a prom date gone wrong 13 years earlier. He isn't the only one after her though. There's just something about Mary.

6. **NEVER BEEN KISSED**

Journalist Josie Geller (Drew Barrymore) is sent as an undercover reporter for the Chicago Sun-Times back to the one place where she never fit in: high

school. Determined not to be "Josie Grossy" anymore, she gets a little help from her brother Rob (David Arquette) to fit in with a group of popular girls to find out what life is really like on the other side.

7. **27 DRESSES**

Jane is always, ALWAYS a bridesmaid. The dress is always perfect, the parties are neverending; she has always been the perfect wedding planner, until her sister gets engaged to the man that Jane is in love with. The movie that made Elton John's "B-b-bennie and the Jets" hilarious, Katherine Heigl and James Marsden star in this romantic comedy that shows us how sometimes we're so busy helping other people with their happy ending that we forget to live our own.

8. CRAZY, STUPID, LOVE

A man's life suddenly takes a turn for the worse when his wife wants a divorce after cheating on him. Cal (Steve Carell) turns to a man he met at a bar, Jacob (Ryan Gosling) to help him discover his masculinity and reclaim his life again. Julianne Moore, Emma Stone, and Kevin Bacon also star and Ryan Gosling is, well, Ryan Gosling. Need I say more?

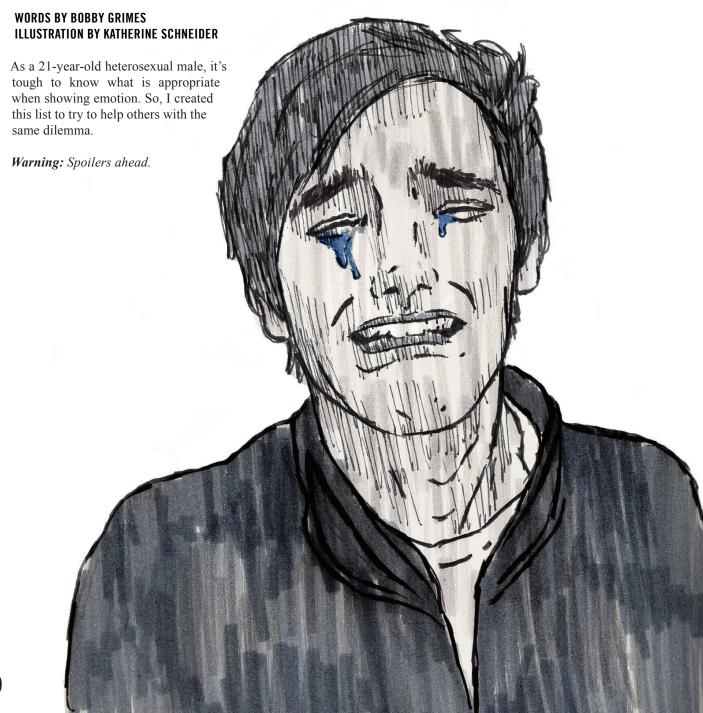
9. THE WEDDING DATE

Worried that she will have to go to her sister's wedding alone, Kat (Debra Messing) hires an escort, Nick (Dermot Mulroney) to pose as her boyfriend to make her ex-fiance rue the day that he decided to leave her. Her plan suddenly changes when Nick convinces everyone, including Kat, that they are madly in love. "Where did you find him?" "In the Yellow Pages."

10. WHAT'S YOUR NUMBER?

Anna Faris plays a woman determined to track down all of her exes after reading a magazine article saying that women who have had more than 20 lovers have difficulty finding a husband. Realizing that she is already at 19, she gets help from her neighbor Colin (Chris Evans) to track down the one.

TOP 8 MOVIES GUYS ARE ALLOWED TO CRY AT



MARLEY AND ME

Everybody cried at this movie... Everybody. I have had many pets growing up, and I didn't feel as strong of a connection with any of them as I did with Marley while watching this film. Plus, to think that I cried at anything with Owen Wilson in it is a bit odd. But the heart feels what the heart feels, you feel?

THE RUGRATS MOVIE

This was the first movie I ever cried at, which was weird because I was only six years old, and no, this was not because of Busta Rhymes' beautiful performance as the Reptar Wagon's voice (thanks IMDB). Even at six, I already had three younger brothers and the theme of responsibility resonated in my tiny heart and body. Stu gives a speech to Tommy about how his new responsibility as a big brother is something to cherish because someday he will be happy to have Dil in his life. But after a series of events where Dil pushes the other babies too far Tommy goes to look for him and they get into a fight in which Tommy says, "You want monkeys? Oh! I'll give you monkeys! You have a monkey Mommy, a monkey Daddy, and a monkey brother! I should have let my friends take you back to the hospital!" And for reasons unbeknownst to me, I cried. I may not have known why, but as pathetic/ridiculous as it may sound, I'm proud to say I learned the value of family so early in my life.

BRAVEHEART

What? You say a Mel Gibson movie is a bit odd to be on this list? Oh, I'm sorry, I didn't know you were a communist who didn't feel the emotion when William Wallace screamed "FREEDOM!" with every bit of passion and energy left in his mutilated body. This may be the typical guy movie (because of all the fighting and battles), and my personal favorite of all time, but there are so many parts in this movie that should get everybody a little choked up. If you say you haven't shed at least one tear when watching this scene, I don't believe you.

HARDBALL

If this movie isn't on your list, there are only two real reasons as to why: either you haven't seen the movie, or you are a soulless, heartless, emotionless person whom I do not want to know or even potentially get to know. Because I played sports when I was younger and I always wanted to play with my older siblings, the longing G-Baby had to play baseball was one I felt as well.

So when he died, and Coach O'Neil gave that speech about his happiness and triumph in the game when he put G-Baby in for the first time, that really hit the heart. Say what you want about Keanu Reeves' acting, I'm convinced those tears were real.

THE NOTEBOOK

Self-explanatory. I don't cry at this every time I watch it; that would just be weird. But if you don't cry during at least one point in this movie, you are more of a man than I am. Still, if you are watching it with a girl, I suggest you at least pretend to cry; can you say brownie points?

RUDY

Despite my love of Rutgers football, this film about Notre Dame football is an all-time favorite of mine and the definition of a classic underdog story. There is something about Rudy's work ethic that gets straight to the core of me, and ultimately hits me when he is being carried off of the field by his teammates after the final play of their big victory. Also, the scene when his dad steps into the stadium for the first time is the same exact feeling I had when seeing Notre Dame play Navy this year. Nothing but chills. And by the way, if you ever meet the real Daniel "Rudy" Ruettiger at an autograph-signing (as I did), try to hold back the urge to tell him you cried at the movie while you've got your arm around him posing for a picture.

GREEN STREET HOOLIGANS

Another sports movie? How surprising. But being a huge soccer—sorry, I mean football—fan, I naturally gravitated toward this film. Any sports fan knows rivalries really do get as heated as they do in this movie. As Pete Dunham taunts Tommy Hatcher about his dead son to distract him so his family and friends can get away from the huge brawl occurring in the background, Tommy delivers the most bone-chilling scene I've ever witnessed. While beating Pete to death, he chants the words of "He's Only a Poor Little Hammer," with Pete ultimately serving as a martyr for what really matters: family. Warning: this scene is NOT for the faint of heart.

UP

Heartbreaking love story to start off this movie. Within five minutes, I had tears in my eyes. No shame in this one. Pixar knows how to do this so well it hurts.

GENERATION SELFIE

Let's face it, folks—we're all full of ourselves. Luckily, developments in handheld technology feed into this, enabling us to capture our likeness instantly with the tap of a touchscreen. Whether it's to snap a sexy new outfit, immortalize a time with our besties, or make a face

that resembles water fowl, "selfies" are bigger than ever. They're so big that "selfie" was Oxford Dictionary's word of the year for 2013. Whether that makes you shake your head at society or feel vindicated in your incessant pixellated photographic efforts, it's undeniable that

people just want to reflect on themselves. They want to see how they look and show others and, in turn, provide a representation of where in fact they fit in this large and intimidating world. So keep snapping those duck faces and let it be known: selfies are here to stay.









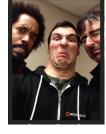










































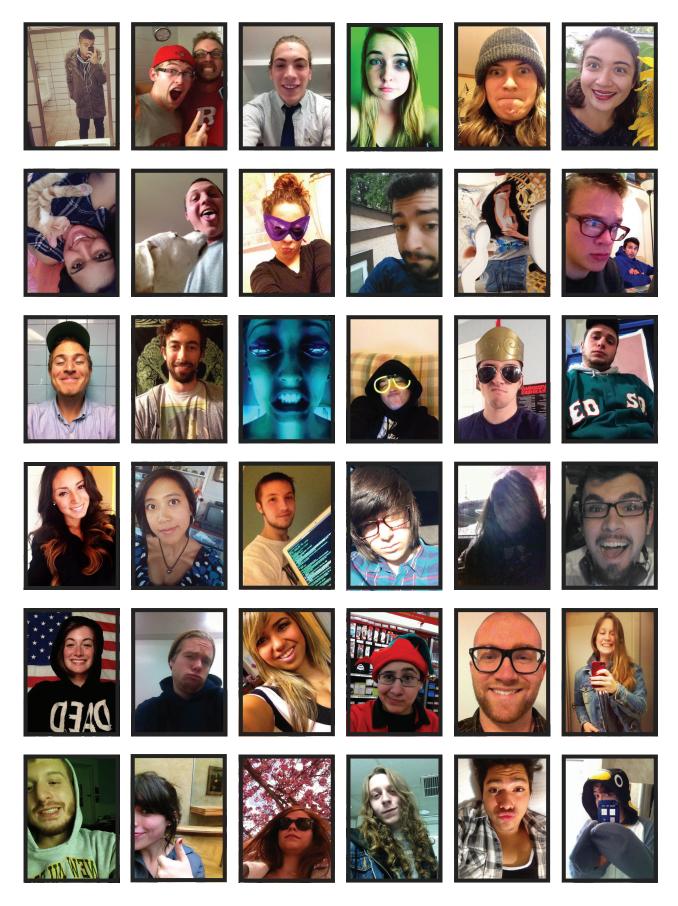














ON HARDCORE

WORDS BY PINKY BURLAK PHOTOS BY MORGAN STURGEON When someone asks what music I'm into, I respond with fierce loyalty: post-hardcore. Eliciting a blank look, I attempt to explain the

harmonious balances between painstakingly devised guitar melodies, emotion-driven vocals, and occasional screaming. I face the next logical assumption: "You listen to Screamo?"

Immediately, all variations are lumped together. I want to change this person's mind, shedding proverbial light on finer nuances among sub-genres. I merely reply, "No, it's different," wishing to remove this assumption. Unless you actively listen, it can be hard to see the difference. I give into my own blue hair, piercings, and clothes (all of which have already labeled me from the start) muttering, "Sure, I listen to screamo." I'm tired of being part of a stereotype I don't belong to.

I aim to set the record straight regarding similarly-sounding genres. They can't all be shoved into one category. Everyone has their own idea of what sets each genre apart; therefore, I will stay true to the music so I can get a glint of recognition in the eyes of the next person who asks me what I listen to.

Let's discuss the one issue that causes me the most

grief. Post-hardcore is more than angry yelling, and it kills me when someone assumes it's screaming without giving it a chance. Let me be clear: the screaming happens. Unlike the growling or angry screams of its genre-cousins, screaming in post-hardcore is more like angst-ridden cries. The screams are deliberately placed in parts where raising of a voice is exactly what the song requires. Moreover, screams go along with appropriate melodies. There's no overbearing macho yelling to a heavy bass beat—rather, there are discernable words that lend depth to the track. These people can sing. You are as likely to hear a whispered croon as a maniacal yelp. The lyrics tell a story; if given a chance, they prove quite cohesive.

If you seek melancholy lyrics relating to real life, I strongly recommend this genre. Every good post-hardcore band has a distinctive sound, frequently using combinations of rock or punk rock guitar and another instrumental focus (Pierce the Veil includes beautiful Spanish guitar while The Venetia Fair mimics the sounds of a demonic carnival in the best sense possible). Post-hardcore is about vocals, angst and stand-out melodic decisions, rather than screaming.

Before anyone bites my head off, I agree that screamo is equally important. Screamo is more aggressive than some of its counterparts. In screamo, the



parts of the song where there's screaming are usually set apart with a nice heavy beat, while the focus remains on the screams. Lyrics are concerned with anything from love and loss to religion and politics. The music is outwardly tough and hard to listen to at first because such anger is more apparent. Yet the meaning behind the words is introspective and significant.

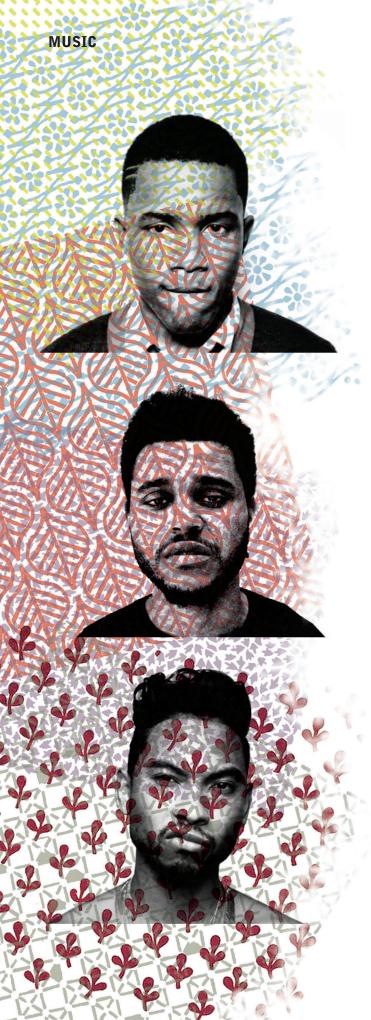
The music that complements the screams is both masterful and melodious while the vocals surprise the listener with abilities to be soft and sweet in contrast to the screams. The difference between screamo and post-hardcore is in song structure. Screamo puts contrasting sounds together in a stream. You would most likely hear a screaming verse, then a singing chorus, screaming again, then a singing chorus, which then moves into a bridge which probably has bits of both (Good example: Attack Attack). With post-hardcore, mixing of such elements is more harmonious and homogenous. There is no set point for screaming—it's just placed wherever in the song it may fit. Screamo is slightly more structured.

The fact that metal genre is thrown into the screamo conundrum is upsetting. Metal came first, so how can it be categorized into a younger genre? Additionally, metal encompasses its own variations. With that in mind, it would take an entire book to explain the

difference between death, black, hair, doom, glam, christian, and viking metal genres. Frankly, the list never ends.

To put it all-inclusively, metal is characterized by loud distorted guitars, emphatic rhythms, dense bassand-drum sound and vigorous vocals. The countless subgenres emphasize, alter, or omit one or more of these attributes. The singing lets it stand apart, whereas the former two genres I explained actually have a common ground. While post-hardcore and screamo bands lean towards higher pitched vocals, Metal tends to gravitate to lower and deeper rock vocals with the tone of voice being as important as the octave (I would recommend Scar Symmetry or Children of Bodom as introductory bands into metal). However, metal has many different forms, so you ought to listen to many more bands to get a proper feel.

In an ideal world, people would not only hear the difference between the genres, but understand them. They sound similar but have distinct characteristics setting them apart. My music is not, in fact, noise. Though some can't see past overbearing melodies and lack of conventional singing, I insist that you try it. You'll like it.



THE RENAISSANCE OF R&B

BY EZEKIEL TEK

Is it fair to say that a genre as comically melodramatic as R&B can experience a renaissance? Four years ago, the answer would have been a resounding yes. But thanks to the ascent of an introspective minimalist from New Orleans, an idiosyncratic glam rock Prince throwback from LA, and a brooding, nihilistic, shadowy persona from Toronto, the genre has become... kind of cool to like.

Thanks to the emergence of Frank Ocean, Miguel, and The Weeknd, R&B has thrived by hearkening back to the universally appealing sounds of Stevie Wonder, Marvin Gaye, and Michael Jackson, while simultaneously bucking the traditional values of the genre and exploring newfound territory. Of course, like any other trend in music, the seeds of this rebirth were sown well before the debut of these artists and much credit does go to artists like Maxwell, Erykah Badu, and Lauryn Hill, who showcased their take on R&B just a little too soon for the now-burgeoning genre.

Take Ocean's most recent album, *channel: OR-ANGE*—the seventeen tracks deliver a cinematic quality to the album as a whole, as well as the diversity of subject matter, proving Ocean is well aware of the reality outside his self-reflection. "Crack Rock" deals with police brutality and drug addiction, and the nine-and-a-half-minute epic, "Pyramids," depicts the rise and fall of the black woman from the mighty Egyptian Queen Cleopatra, to a modern day stripper bearing the same name. "Pink Matter" questions the meaning of life, while "Sweet Life" and "Super Rich Kids" paint satirical pictures of the modern super wealthy.

While the album does feel somewhat disjointed due to misplaced interludes that disrupt the transition from one section of the album to another, it is still an immensely powerful listening experience which coincided with another LA-based alternative R&B artist's belated emergence. With *Kaleidoscope Dream*'s release in 2012, Miguel self-actualized and released all potential inhibitors on his artistry by incorporating everything from EDM to funk into his repertoire. The first four tracks of the album from "Adorn" to "Do You" are by far the best, proving that Miguel is the best pure singer in the genre today.

Throughout the album, Miguel takes noticeable creative liberties, such as the use of the bass line from Eminem's classic "My Name Is" on the title track or slow-jamming to The Zombies' "Time of the Season" toward the end of "Don't Look Back." Like Ocean,

he ponders existence on tracks such as "Where's the Fun in Forever" and "Candles In The Sun."

Miguel's unleashed potential has yet to be experienced by the youngest of this new R&B triumvirate, Abel Tesfaye, better known by his stage name, The Weeknd. Tesfaye's latest record, Kiss Land, failed to deliver on its promise, but is still a uniquely crafted, horror movie-inspired LP that sets itself apart from Miguel's "artsy-pop"

and Ocean's heartbroken sentimentality. "Wanderlust" and "Belong to the World" are dark descendants of Michael Jackson's production style, paying homage to the "King of Pop" with a more somber twist added into the mix. The standout performance on this album, and maybe of the year, is "Tears in the Rain," which features a good two minute falsetto riff heightened by the overlaying simplistic chorus.

Ironically, the sole guest spot of this album comes courtesy of Drake, the embodiment of the "sensitive thug" persona that prevailed in R&B during the 2000's. Despite being a decent singer with a good feel for ambience and a replay-value quality, his embarrassingly superficial "hard rapper" image has undercut his duly-credited value to the genre which Ocean, Miguel, and Tesfaye are tentatively placed in. And tentative is the right word to use, because of the naturally evolving nature of these artists.

Ocean recently stated he was influenced by The Beach Boys and The Beatles for his next studio album, part of which has been recorded in Bora Bora. Miguel took a cue from The Weeknd's release of three free online mixtapes with three free online EP's of his own (dubbed Art Dealer Chic) in the run up to Kaleidoscope Dream's release, reintroducing himself with quirky, existentialist lyrics which built anticipation for a studio album, just as Ocean had done with nostalgia ULTRA (his online mixtape released over a year before channel: ORANGE). Consequently, the arrival of the internet mixtage revolution to R&B has spurred the creative renaissance of the genre and proven to be the catalyst of success for these artists who otherwise would have been unable to make headway through a major label.

A genre that was never highly nuanced in its production or overly revolutionary in its subject matter has expanded to incorporate new topics, new sounds, and a wholly transformative style. Miguel stated he

> felt comfortable with the phrase "indie R&B" stating, "it suggests there's more artistry within a genre that has become more of a cliche of itself."

Artists both at the helm of the mainstream R&B flagship as well as the more quirky needle pushers of the alternative-sub genre are being caught up in the wave of exploration. Usher's most recent album Looking 4 Myself received some critical praise for its somewhat

more experimental sound permeating alternative R&B into the mainstream, while the ethereal and ambient sounds of How To Dress Well have landed him two studio albums and standing within the emerging secret society of these indie crooners.

Once known as hip-hop's "hook supplyin' weed carrier," R&B has transformed itself into a viable genre once again thanks to a diverse group of individuals with equally diverse sounds. Ocean's admitted he doesn't like girls, The Weeknd gave his first interview ever this year, and Miguel can't resist pulling out wardrobes as interesting as his music. To call alternative R&B a trend would be reductionist. It has instead come to envelop the music of Motown and Michael Jackson with the finer aspects of pop music, and finding a quiet confidence that is rare in today's music industry.



FOR AN ACT AS SACRED AS HOLDING HANDS WITH A GIRL IN THE FRONT SEAT OF TAYLOR, YOUR 1997 FORD EXPLORER (NAMED AFTER TAYLOR SWIFT), HOW DO COULD YOU POSSIBLY DECIDE WHAT KIND OF MUSIC YOU PUT ON? MY WAY: GIRL TIME PLAYLIST.

First: don't call it "Girl Time Playlist." Why even have a playlist, you ask? I have a friend who put on a John Mayer album one time when he was studying abroad, then thought about the velvet-voiced womanizer sitting in the room staring at them the whole time. There was also a time I frantically put on *Obrigado Brazil* by Yo-Yo Ma, and the girl said, "What the fuck is this?"

When my radio was broken and my iPod died, I sat through the horror of silence. I felt uncomfortable, stopping the kissing every few minutes to say, "So... how are you doing?" or "Who is your favorite Game of Thrones narrative viewpoint?" To ensure you don't wind up apathetically putting your iPod on shuffle (risking "One Day More" from the Les Miserables soundtrack), the only solution is planning ahead to make a playlist that would make even Aphrodite melt. When I find myself sitting down to make "Date Playlist," "Makeout Playlist," or "Bow Chica Wow Wow Playlist," I figure my soiree is doomed from the start. So I keep it simple, naming the playlist after the girl I'm taking out.

I generally forget to delete these playlists. When I started to understand the art of the hookup playlist, I terrifyingly realized that I use 90% of the same songs every time. Was I that predictable? My darkest day was when I lazily changed the name of a playlist from one ex-girlfriend to a new, now-ex, girlfriend. Did this doom it from the start?

A good rule is to go about the playlist with some go-to artists that'll give you the right tone. Have a bullpen of songs to choose from. For instance, R. Kelly might be a safe bet. Go with "Bump and Grind" once. Then, "Ignition (Remix)" next for a good result.

Beware though: you may find yourself in prickly territory if you throw on "Trapped In the Closet Part 9."

I'll run you through a few excerpts from my last playl-

"The Way" by Ariana Grande, quite possibly the best frisky song of all time.

"Treasure" by Bruno Mars,

"Poetic Justice" by Kendrick Lamar, and "In the Sun" by She & Him.

She was a 500 Days of Summer type so I threw in "Simple Song" by the Shins,

"Fly Me to the Moon" by Ol' Blue Eyes, and "Frankly Mr. Shankly" by the Smiths.

The result: Pretty okay. She didn't start yelling at me until we were on the beach without any music playing, so I think that's a point in favor of the playlist.

Most importantly, if you pick a song, make sure you mean it. You have to be prepared that whatever happens, a song will remind you of it every time you hear it afterward. With "When Doves Cry" by Prince, it got heated. I was dripping with sweat and sensuality—the girl and I didn't even do anything, but I was sweaty regardless. To this day, I have a Pavlovian reaction.

There are songs I've used in every version of The Playlist, like "She Moves in Her Own Way" by the Kooks, but I always end with one special closing song: "Just Like Heaven" by The Cure. The end of the playlist is usually the point where everything goes wrong. Either she liked my friend, still loved her ex-boyfriend, or didn't want to keep it up since she was at TCNJ... all to the tune of "Just Like Heaven." So, I've decided that I have to keep it on until I get a good situation out of such a classic.

Will I break the curse? All I know is one thing: if you put three T-Swift songs in a row, you have a shot at the blue-eyed goddess; and at the very least, scare away girls you wouldn't want in your 1997 Ford Explorer anyway.



WORDS BY SPENCE BLAZAK PHOTO BY NICK PERRONE

WHY I WON'T PUT MY IPOD O HUFF

BY BOBBY GRIMES

I have refrained from putting my iPod on shuffle in public. It's not that I'm embarrassed of my music choices, but I'm a weird guy; I don't want strangers knowing how weird I am—at least not yet.

I own a classic 2004 iPod Video with a label that reads, "He said she ain't got no nipples." I'm not sure who would be proud of sharing this with their friends, much less cute girls at parties interested in their music choice. This piece of technology belongs in the annals of music history. It's certainly "well-loved." The sticker from seventh grade is peeling. The dents and sand inside remind me of trying pick up girls at the beach in eighth grade. The sun distorted the display, and this technological artifact has been scratched so badly, it looks like it got into a fight with several Pokèmon.

Some songs are oldies but goodies, some unknown, and others, just plain weird. Some give people a weird vibe, like the one-hit-wonder entitled "My Final Broadcast" from my eighth-grade hardcore/emo band (Before The After Party, or BTAP). We weren't sad, but we had teen angst. One word: embarrassing. Others are from my Christmas album, made with my friend Mike. Our personal favorite, "Christmas Remix of Ignition (Remix)." Though a favorite among friends, I'd prefer it not come up on a first date.

I'm the guy who likes to listen to talk music (look up Listener if you like poetry), country music, bluegrass, jam bands (with vocalists who sing unusually weird like The Front Bottoms and Dananananaykroyd), types of punk rock like The Clash and Social Distortion, unpopular rap by Chance The Rapper/

> P.O.S./White Shark, and boy bands like Hanson, Backstreet Boys, *NSYNC, LFO, and One Direction.

How would you feel if Trevor Rabin's musical score from Remember The Titans came on while hooking up with someone? It can't be overlooked, especially when my brother's acoustic comedy duo follows directly after. Sometimes,

> my iPod gives hope by playing an appropriate tune, then rips it away, playing "Guy Love" from Scrubs or the song from the Nickelodeon show Doug.

You've never experienced awkward until you've been to a Bruce Springsteen concert, blasting music at a tailgate, and suddenly, "C is for Cookie" from Sesame Street pops up on

shuffle. Or, when you're in the car with your little sister and niece, and vulgar and misogynistic rap begins blasting, so you quickly fumble to change it. Perhaps the worst: when your grandma sees you are listening to a band called Murder By Death.

When in doubt, make a playlist. Or maybe you can tell them to pick what they like. Perhaps internet radio is the way to go. No matter what, spare any embarrassment by not letting me put my iPod on shuffle.

AN OPEN COVER LETTER TO CAPITALI\$T\$

— BY PEMA KONGPO —

Dear Prospective Employer,

My name is Pema Kongpo, and I am currently in my last semester at Rutgers University pursuing a Bachelors of Science in Biomedical Engineering and a second degree in Sociology. I am not an astounding student, the perfect roommate, an ideal daughter, or an enlightened human being, but I am a work in progress. My identity, who I am and who I will come to be, cannot be expressed across the limits of a page, but alas this is the only attempt I have to resonate my being beyond the analysis of empirical facts you gather from me within this application.

At the ripe age of 22, I come to your capitalistic benevolence and beg you to take my labor and ask to make me another commodity of your regime. What can I offer that I may bear my soul a victim to your hands, you say? I bring forth the fuel to my light of knowledge that I have not garnered alone through educational institutionalization, but from all the encounters I have made in my walk of life.

I am a thinker. From the false consciousness of the American ethos, I have risen above a generation of ritualistic students who, although they may be able, do not adapt to the reality in which we live and function. I have mastered the dynamic ability to learn, construct, understand, deconstruct, and unlearn. Thus choosing how I am molded, unsubjective to the grace of your cookie cutters, so that I may mold all that is tangible, physical and abstract.

I am capable. Of what? The word capability itself bargains with the potential of the future, and although the rationalization of society wrestles the unpredictability of the unaccountable, the future is ultimately undefined. Capability is all I have at this sole moment. I am a bird leaving the nest for the first time, banished to the realm of gravity with no defense but the strength of my own wings as the watchful eyes of those trapped in a coop leer peripherally.

It's imperative that I must warn you: I am a predator. I do not come in peace, nor do I savor carnage. Like a hawk that is one with the wilderness, I am one with this society. But in the face of hunger I will strike and leave nothing but the bones. Until then, I will watch, and I will wait. And should you bear mercy on this spirit of mine as it begins its initial flight outside the parameters of security by providing the support of a tree that may shelter me from the forces of nature and from which I may prey, I will rise. Defend your skies in turn, I will, in hopes of one day having enough fuel so that my light can touch all that the Sun does.

I am a thinker. I am capable. I am a predator. And I have not quite left the nest—yet.

Sincerely and symbolically, Pema Kongpo

LIVING INDEPENDENT

BY CHELSEA SIRICO PHOTO BY KATE MARC

I've never been good at being single. From my first boyfriend until years after, I've jumped from one relationship to another, clinging on to that special or, more often, not-so-special somebody. When I wasn't in a relationship, I was mourning over the last one or occupied with a new hookup, so it was rare that I had time to focus solely on myself.

I could say that I did it because it was fun or convenient. Who else would listen to that story about the funny thing that happened in lecture today? Who else would I go to the beach with when my friends were busy? But to be honest, I stayed in relationships for so long because I was afraid of being alone.

During my last relationship, a wave of intuition hit me out of nowhere. I realized that it might not have been the right time in my life for a relationship—something I'd never felt before—and the more I thought about it, the more I was certain my intuition was right.



The funny thing is that it had nothing to do with the quality of that relationship. My boyfriend at the time had come to be one of my best friends

BEING SINGLE DIDN'T MAKE ME ALONE. ACTUALLY, THE LAST THING I FELT WAS LONELINESS.

and we had a great relationship, but after a long array of nothing but relationships, I desperately needed time off.

As I transitioned between dating that guy to being single, many things occurred to me. I began craving time to myself more and more, feeling as though I was putting my hobbies and interests on the back burner. I thought about all the things I wanted to do, places I wanted to travel to, my future plans.

It became apparent to me, and to my boyfriend as well, that our relationship was dwindling. I reflect upon that time in my life and the experience I gained from it and know that I made the right move. Being single didn't make me alone. Actually, the last thing I felt was loneliness. Committing to a single lifestyle allowed me the time to explore my wants and needs. With every relationship, we give and take, but sometimes we give too much. In retrospect, it's clear that I lost part of my independence in every relationship I've had.

I think that we often seek out a connection, someone to pair up with, for fear of a lack of companionship. Independence, solitude and time to yourself, however, are always ready to be embraced. At this point in my life, there aren't many things that need to be set in stone. I don't know where I'm going to spend my summer or in what country I'll be. I'm 21, and the last thing I want to do is limit myself.

BETWEEN

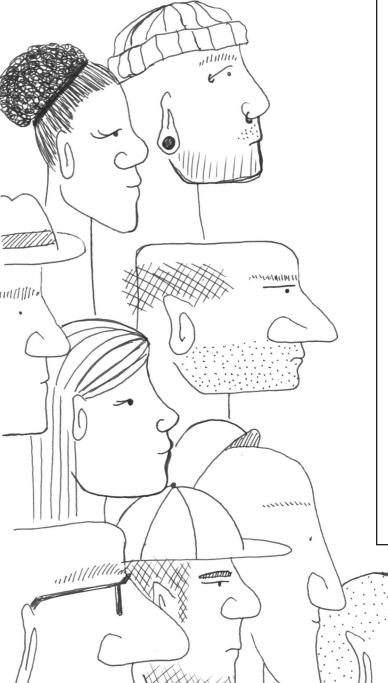
BY LIZZIE ROBERTS

If you look up to the sky and say what you see there, what would you say? Would you say that you see God, or nothing, or an immeasurable sum of parts of the world, a reflection of yourself, of everyone living and breathing on Earth? Or do you simply see pigment and clouds?

There is a great and troubling mystery inclusive in the vastness of the sky. It lets you know that seven billion people have looked at the same arrangement of clouds and shades of blue. You are not bigger or smaller than any other person who lives under this sky. It is not your sky; it is everyone's. But surely, we all see something different in this vastness of clouds and air and sun and blue. However, this "something different" that you see is most likely the same something different that someone else sees.

We humans are all connected—connected by our earthly and unearthly struggles, connected simply by the fact that we are all human, mortal and finite beings. We are all earthly creatures, bound by mortality, who go through life and struggle and know sadness and hurt and happiness and joy. We are human. We try to make peace with our human problems. We were born here, and we will all die here.

Find comfort in this fact. We will all experience death, the one constant that we as humans can expect. To be born means you must die eventually. This may scare you, but it is an inevitable part of life, and there is no point in being afraid of something that is definitely going to happen. We are all homo sapiens, the same—perhaps different in life experience, but the same in our being. Our feet touch the Earth, we feel the splendor of the sun and the rain on our skin. We will die bound to the place we lived our lives.



CULTURE SHOCK

BY ALLISON CHAYYA

IN ANCIENT ROME,
YOU PROBABLY ENDED UP MARRYING HIM.
OR YOU TOOK A PAGE OUT OF LUCRECE,
AND KILLED YOURSELF.
TO KEEP YOUR FAMILY'S HONOR INTACT.
ONLY TO HAVE THE LATER CHRISTIANS
CLAIM THAT YOUR SUICIDE
CONFIRMED YOUR ENCOURAGEMENT.

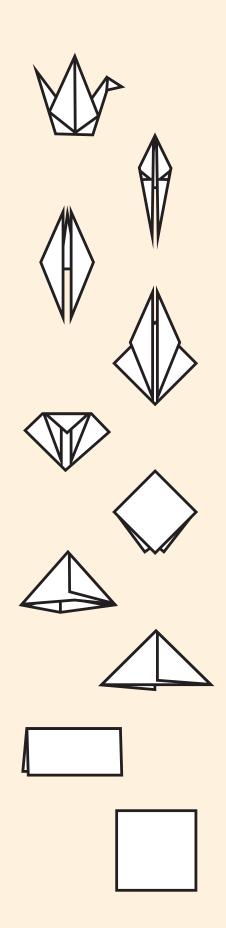
TODAY
YOU GET TO STARE AT HIM
ACROSS THE QUAD.
YOU GET TO PULL HIS FACEBOOK PAGE UP
FOR THE COPS.
YOU GET TO CHOKE ON THE LAW'S DUBIOUS,
"SO YOU INVITED HIM
INTO YOUR ROOM?"

TODAY
YOU GET THEM BLURRED LINES
(YOU KNOW YOU WANT IT)
YOU GET "YOU KNOW YOU WANT IT"
ALCOHOL THICK AND BREATHED AGAINST YOUR
CLAMMY SKIN.

IF YOU WERE A WOMAN
OF GREEK MYTH
YOU PROBABLY GOT CALLED LUCKY
SHOULD A GOD CHOOSE YOU.
YEATS WOULD WRITE AWFUL POEMS ABOUT YOUR ENCOUNTER,
WORDS PURPOSELY AMBIGUOUS
IMPLYING THAT YOU HAD WANTED IT.

(YOU KNOW YOU WANT IT.)

SEPARATED BY TIME AND PLACE, BUT CAN'T YOU FEEL THE ECHO OF HISTORY? DON'T YOU FEEL THAT POWERFUL SHADOW OF YESTERDAY ON YOUR SHOULDERS? WE'RE NOT SO DIFFERENT PAST AND PRESENT. WE MAY BE DIFFERENT CULTURES; DIFFERENT REGIONS, TIME PERIODS, RELIGIONS, POLITICAL REGIMES. **BUT AFTER ALL** WE'RE ALL A PART OF THE TIME-HONORED. LOVINGLY PRESERVED CULTURE OF RAPE.



MATTERS UNFOLDING

BY ELIZABETH GIARDINA

HOW WE ARE MADE SMELLS OF STORIES AND SHADES. ALL BLOCKED UP AND BRAIDED INTO OUR LIMBS

I USED TO BE FOLDED AND CREASED UP LIKE CRANES MADE OF PAPER, MY HAIR GREASED AND ARMS HUNG IN WOMB-TIME FOR GOOD LUCK AND STRONG HEALTH

MY FINGERS WERE BONY AND HAD WOOD RINGS ROUND THEM LIKE DRY WOMEN ON PARK BENCHES WITH THEIR GRANDCHILDREN AND BREADCRUMBS

I CAN COUNT THEIR YEARS ON ONE OF THEIR HANDS

HOW WE MATTER FLOATS BENEATH THE MATTERS OF MONDAY MORNINGS IT TOTES THE TATTERS OF ELEMENTS BROKEN DOWN IN DANCING GODS AND QUARKS BENEATH US

THEY AREN'T BENEATH US BUT BETWEEN US

I FEEL THEM BETWEEN WHO I AM IN MY ELBOW AND WHO I AM IN MY ANKLE

AND I FEEL THEM BETWEEN WHO I AM IN MY ANKLE AND WHO YOU ARE SITTING IN A CHAIR WITH YOUR LOWER **BACK CURVED JUST SO**

DO YOU HAVE ONE OF WHO YOU ARE IN YOUR LOWER BACK CURVE? IS IT CRADLED LIKE MY NEWBORN HEAD WAS WHEN I WAS UNFOLDED, FED THE LUCK OF TIME GONE BEFORE ME?

HOW WE PIECE OURSELVES TOGETHER WITH

PUZZLES LEFT US IS A MATTER

MADE ENTIRELY OF ITSELF HOW THE PIECES OF MY NIECES AND NEPHEWS

WILL WANDER HOW THEY WILL BREAK THROUGH BRAIDED

BLOCKS AND TOE THEM LIKE LINES DRAWN IN SAND

HOW THEY WILL REBUILD

WITH NEW WORDS FRECKLES DIMPLES WHERE SHADOWS SWIM AND SWIRL HOW THEY WILL WRITE ANSWERS DOWN THAT WRAP THEMSELVES UP INTO CROOKED ELBOWS AND ANKLES CREAKING QUESTIONS WITH EVERY STEP OR EMBRACE

THEY WILL BECOME UNFOLDED AND STRETCH ON COFFEE TABLES IN THE SUN WITH SOFTENED CREASES **ERASED SCRIBBLES**

THE EARTH WILL NIBBLE ON THEIR EDGES AS IT CREEPS ROUND THEM AND I WILL WALK THEIR WORLDLY WRINKLES

PHONE NUMBERS?

BY KATELYN DEVINE

WITH JUST SOME-ONE'S NAME, YOU CAN DISCOVER THEIR FACEBOOK, LINKEDIN, AND RE-CENT APPEARANCES IN POLICE BLOTTER. IN FIVE MINUTES YOU KNOW WHAT **CONCERTS THEY** WENT TO LAST SUM-MER, WHAT THEY **WORE TO SENIOR** PROM, AND WHAT THEIR EX LOOKED LIKE IN 2008.



There are few non-living things that seem to mature just like people do. For our millennial generation, technological devices are now frighteningly human and hopelessly essential. The most ubiquitous of them all, the cell phone, has been with most of us since adolescence. Our dependence on cell phones has become so normal that it seems odd to pause and think about what we've gained and what we've lost. So let us take a moment and consider ourselves and our cell phones.

Since I was gifted my very first cell phone in the seventh grade, I have upgraded through the years and ranks to the most advanced of them all, the iPhone. Same phone number, completely different circumstances. I can access my e-mail, the weather, a flashlight, Google, and yet there are only four buttons on the whole device. Just as we have advanced and developed, our cell phones have in our pockets alongside us. What has also changed is the nature of the phone number, who asks for it, and what we even need it for. What has become of that ten-digit number that I excitedly repeated to myself as a twelve-year-old? What happens upon meeting someone new, when they ask, "Can I have your number?"

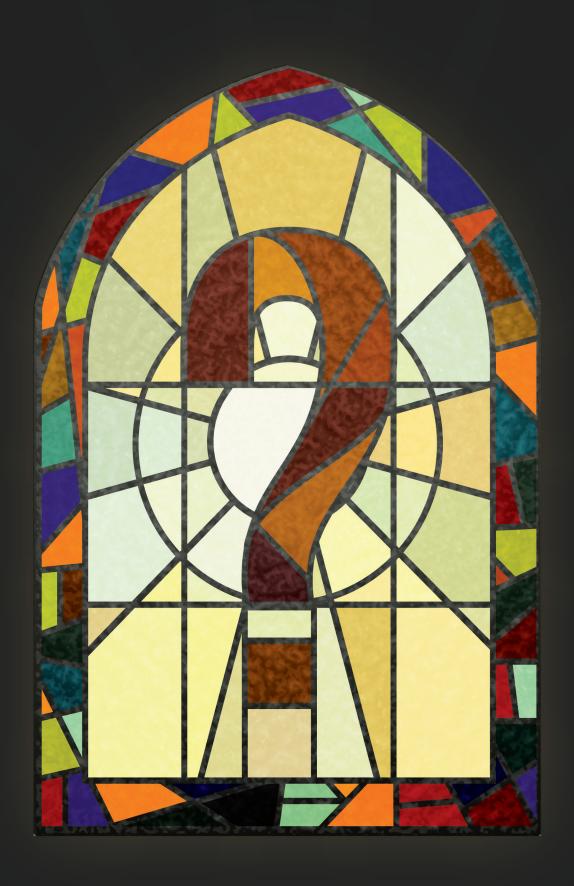
At one time, cellular phones were exciting because of their mobility. The promise was: never again will important phone calls be sentenced to the purgatory of an answering machine. This makes interaction easier for both the caller and the called. Yet although convenience is gained, a part of the human experience is lost. Inconvenience, in hindsight, holds a quaint and nostalgic quality. No longer do we wait in our bedrooms for that special someone to call, and no longer do we play the same answering machine message over and over for our friends to decipher. No longer is the phone call even that important for getting to

With just someone's name, you can discover their Facebook, LinkedIn, and recent appearances in police blotter. In five minutes you

know what concerts they went to last summer, what they wore to senior prom, and what their ex looked like in 2008. Incredibly enough, you can accomplish the entire investigation on your phone—the same phone that once was only accessible through the exchange of phone numbers. It is possible and normal to find out everything you need to know about someone without even talking about it. First dates have become a little bit of a coy game in which you both pretend that you don't already know so much about each other. When we take off our 21st century rose-colored glasses and really examine what is going on, it is pretty strange.

Despite this, we continue to play the game of exchanging phone numbers. Optimistically, the exchange could be a genuine gesture of courtship. Asking for someone's phone number is the polite way to ensure future communication. It seems more respectable than slyly adding them on Facebook. Maybe this is our last attempt at pretending we live in the world of yesteryear, when real human interaction, effort, and a little bit of luck were required to get to know a person.

Thanks to our cell phones, we will never have to spend a Friday night waiting home by the phone, but we also may never date people mysteriously and surprisingly ever again.



RELIGION

BY JOE DILEO

I remember the first time that I experienced firsthand how my take on religion had drifted from that of my parents. We were all sitting outside on one of those semiwarm April days where we convince ourselves that it's spring weather. The conversation drifted to the beautiful deck we were sitting on which had been built the previous summer by our family friend and lovable local who died the winter after.

"Yeah, you bet that Ralphie's lookin' down on a day like today!" my dad remarked. I remember the spark of irony that went off in my mind. For the first time my mind didn't just soak in that age-old statement. I didn't doubt what he said—I actually admired the confidence with which he said it.

Why wouldn't he say it with confidence? He came from a God-fearing Irish-Italian family and did the Kthrough-8 track in Catholic school. But those details don't really matter: my parents grew up in a time which God was a fact and not a hopeful hypothesis. As sure as there were stars in the sky, God was lurking somewhere up there waiting to welcome us into his kingdom.

A part of me always wondered, "Why wasn't that deep belief passed on to me?" My parents surely believe in God, but they instilled religion in me in a more lax environment. I was baptized and I made my Communion; we were the "Christmas/Easter" churchgoers. There were never fearful "God is watching you!" or "This is a sin, that's a sin...sin, sin, sin!" lectures drilled into my young mind. I was raised to believe in God, but I was taught to be a good person in purely secular terms.

I've gotten subtle hints on my parents' slight drifts from structured religion. My mom cringes at every tale of child abuse in the church. My dad referred to his Catholic school as "gladiator school" with borderline evil nuns. I believe that the religious environment he was brought up in never quite settled within him. Yet through it all they're still confident in the man upstairs. At 21, it's easy for me to sit back and dissect God and religious beliefs, but maybe when you're pushing towards your golden years in an empty nest you need that comfort of something else besides old age waiting down the road. Can hardly count on retirement anymore!

The idea of family and friends "looking down" is a tough one for me to comprehend, but I still don't rule out the possibility of something. I find comfort in karma. I believe that karma exists as some governing force that justifies and balances acts of good and acts of malice. So then I think to myself, if karma is real, then there has to be some type of regulating spiritual force out there. If I completely doubt the existence of God, then how could a force like karma truly exist?

And that's where I stand now. I generally waver between the belief that karma will be my salvation and an existential crisis where everything is a hedonistic free-forall. And in all honesty, there's comfort in both. For now, I'll sit on that fence.

